



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Youth Experiencing Homelessness

How to Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19

COVID-19 is the short name for “coronavirus disease 2019.” It is caused by a new virus that is mainly spread from person to person. Doctors and scientists are still learning about it. Recently, this virus has made many people sick. Here’s what you need to know to help protect yourself and people you care about from COVID-19.

- Stay in touch with your case workers, group home staff, or shelter staff. They can help you to know what’s happening with COVID-19 in your community.
- [Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If you don’t have soap and water, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.
- You can get sick from other people who are sick, so try to stay away from them as much as possible. Help them get to medical care if they need it.
- Avoid hanging out in groups. If you need to be in a group, stay at least two arms lengths (6 feet) from other people.
- Wear a cloth face covering (for example, a scarf or bandana)
 - Cloth face coverings are not for children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is not awake or can’t take the mask off by themselves.
 - See [more information on cloth face coverings](#).
- Stay connected even if you have to be apart.
 - If you feel sad, lonely, scared, or anxious, reach out for help from a counselor or case worker or call the youth homelessness hotline at: 1-888-373-7888.
 - Reach out to your family, friends, and case workers on the phone or online if possible.
 - Use a buddy system to make sure you and your friends are safe.
- Be aware that there might be changes in locations or hours of operation for food, housing, mental health, substance use, and health care services.

If you get sick

- Some of the [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 are cough, a hard time breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell. If you have any of these symptoms, let someone (like a case worker) know so you can get help if needed.
- If your symptoms get worse (like you have trouble breathing or pain/pressure in your chest, confusion or bluish lips or face), call 911 or get immediate help from a doctor.
- Whenever you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or use the inside of your elbow. Throw

used tissues in the trash.

- Continue to wear a cloth face covering when you are around other people.
- Ask for help from case workers, group home staff, or shelter staff to find a safe place to stay while you get better.

See more information [about COVID-19 online](#).

Need help? Know someone who does?

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others:

Call 911

Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Lifeline Crisis Chat

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224

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Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#), [Division of Viral Diseases](#)